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Deputy Chief, Economic Research Area, CIA

24 April 1956

Chief, Industrial Division, CIA

The Division-level Staff

1. Summary

It is the conclusion of this memorandum that a division staff of three persons, but under any conditions not fewer than two, is essential to fulfilling efficiently the mission of the division. The purposes which the staff serves are discussed below. It is worth noting at this point, however, that the present D/I staff of three persons has made a genuine contribution to the operation of the division, and that the amount of useful work charged to this staff has frequently required overtime (both compensated and uncompensated) during the past two years. Reducing the staff will not reduce the amount of work to be done and will necessarily result in a reassignment of duties to branch personnel. This would be less efficient from an operational point of view.

2. Functions

The division staff carries out a variety of functions, the more important of which fall into five general categories: (a) liaison and coordination with all components outside the division; (b) assisting the Division Chief and his deputy in carrying out the division research program; (c) administrative support of the Division Chief; (d) aiding the Division Chief in review of division projects; (e) performing short- and long-term research on special problems that cut across branch lines of responsibility.

3. Objectives

There are four primary objectives of the division staff: (a) to minimize the time spent on division research by handling the multitude of minor demands or requests which would otherwise fall upon the branches; (b) to enable the Division Chief to operate more effectively by allowing him more time for research direction; (c) to improve the quality of projects submitted by conducting impartial reviews of the branch work; (d) to carry out research that can best be done on a division-wide basis.

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4. Activities

The variety of staff responsibilities can best be shown by listing various staff duties. Special assistants, for example, are members of standing or special ORR committees such as the Foreign Document Exploitation Committee. The staff supplies liaison with the Current Support Staff and coordinates division requirements, investigates possibilities of new source exploitation, maintains liaison with other office and agency components such as St/A, FDD and OCR.

Assisting the Division Chief in research supervision, the staff exercises project control over the research program, assists in the substantive review of branch and area-wide projects, and participates in the research planning of the Division.

The staff aids the Division Chief in such administrative matters as initial reviewing of personnel folders, and preparation of monthly reports, job descriptions, and the division budget. The staff supplies over-all supervision of division clerical personnel, and guides the division in special security matters and emergency regulations.

The staff also does the final ORR editing for MIS Section 64, Manufacturing and Construction and gives editorial assistance to analysts in the preparation of branch projects. In this connection the staff also maintains close liaison with St/PB.

As necessary, the division staff has engaged in research. This has included research for NIE's on North Korea and Austria areas not closely followed by individual branches, and major research projects, such as the MIS on Manufacturing and Construction, USSR, that could have been done in a branch only by a major sacrifice in the FY '56 research program.

Finally, the division staff has served as a support staff to the Division. This work has included the publication of plan and plan fulfillment data on the USSR and the publication of a Guide to the Industrial Division. The latter publication has resulted in substantial savings in the amount of time devoted to branch briefings.

These functions are cited only to suggest the scope and variety of the staff duties. In addition, the staff deals with manifold special problems which arise continually and must be handled quickly.

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5. Rationale underlying the staff organization

General expansion of operations in the Agency, together with constant refinement of both collection and research techniques have necessitated an increase in the work conducted at division level. It is possible, of course, to pass much of this work along to the branches, as some divisions do, but the process would be an uneconomical allocation of time.

Work of a general nature can be carried out more efficiently by a staff trained to handle such problems. The special assistant not only must be familiar with the work in progress in all branches, he must also be closely acquainted with all the organizations the division deals with. No Branch Chief or analyst is equipped to operate effectively in this broader field. One special assistant can often answer a requirement in the time it would take a branch analyst to determine the format of the submission and find out what channels are indicated.

There are also continuing functions of common concern to the division, such as membership in current support, foreign language exploitation, NIS and EIC committees. Assigning these tasks to branch analysts would be a double encroachment on their research time. They would not only spend hours at meetings; they would also spend time familiarizing themselves with the problems of all the other branches. The special assistant already has this background and can do the job in half the time.

A basic principle of organization is to allocate personnel in such a way that they are performing as effectively as possible. There is general division work to be done; to do it through other than staff means is to work without organization.

6. Recommendations

In view of these considerations, this division feels that a staff of three special assistants, and certainly not fewer than two, is a reasonable allocation of personnel.

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